



Supporting Employers in Implementing Gradual Returns to Work: A Transdiagnostic and Inclusive Tool

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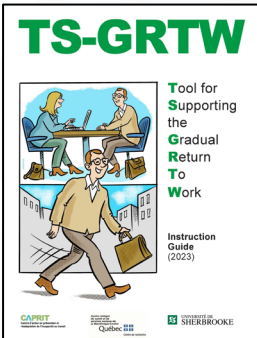
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Introduction

Gradual exposure to work has been shown to facilitate the return to work, but only if a sufficient margin of maneuver is maintained.¹

Margin of maneuver

The possibility or freedom a worker has to develop different ways of working to meet production targets, without having adverse effects on his or her health.²



- Designed and validated to help workplaces create and preserve such margins of maneuver during the gradual return to work of people with **musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)**³.
- Adapted for use with workers who have **common mental disorders (CMD)**, taking certain vulnerability factors (i.e., **age, gender, ethnocultural diversity**) into account.

Objective

To evaluate the usability of this adapted version of the TS-GRTW with individuals responsible for disability management in the workplace.

Methodology

- ✓ Descriptive design
- ✓ Purposive sampling
- ✓ Various types of workplaces
- ✓ Semi-structured interviews
- ✓ Qualitative analysis: analytical questioning

Results

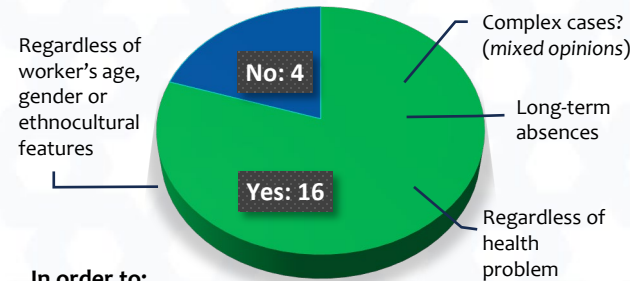
Participants

(n=23, workplaces n=20)

Age	Mean 42,5 (SD 8)
Sex	17 females 6 males
Position	20 HR consultants 2 supervisors
Length of service	Mean 5,7 (SD 5)
Experience	Mean 14,1 (SD 8)

Workplaces: 16/20 = 500+ employees, 10 sectors of activity

Organizations intending to use the adapted TS-GRTW (n=20)



In order to:

- Support communications between stakeholders
- Make explicit/structure the organizational GRTW process
- Facilitate GRTW planning
- Monitor the GRTW

Why use it (or not)?



TS-GRTW features

Exhaustive Simple Clear Succinct Structuring

- ✓ Standardizes the RTW process
- ✓ Delegates tasks to managers and supervisors
- ✓ Structures stakeholder communications
- ✓ Monitors actions
- ✓ Promotes worker engagement
- ✓ Fosters a shared understanding and legitimization of the process within the organization



Organizational features

- High workload (no time to use)
- Particular work requirements/arrangements (e.g., emergency services)
- Multi-site organizations

Discussion

- ✓ Characteristics of the adapted TS-GRTW make it generally **useful for large organizations** (500+ employees).
- ✓ Certain characteristics like its **structuring capacity** could also make the TS-GRTW **useful for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)**,⁴ which are a major employer in Quebec (56% of Quebec workforce).⁵ However, its usability would need to be assessed.

Conclusion

In a nutshell

- Potential users in large organizations intend to use the tool to manage GRTW after long-term absences due to MSD and CMD for workers of all ages, genders and ethnocultural backgrounds.
- They expect that using the TS-GRTW will benefit their organization, but that certain organizational features may limit its application.

Future research

- Exploring perceived usability of the adapted TS-GRTW for SMEs
- Documenting the impact of real-world use of the adapted TS-GRTW on practices and workers' experience

References

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